



## Rising River Impacts Project

Missouri is known as “where the rivers run,” and the Mississippi is certainly running. The rising river flowed over its banks, shutting down roads and slowing construction even before the predicted crest.

“The contractor can work on a few items at Pier 2 and at the end of the bridge on the Missouri side,” said MoDOT Senior Construction Inspector Rick Lamb, “but, the river hampers a lot.”

The contractor had to put most of its efforts toward moving materials when the river began to rise. Some of the supplies were warehoused in an area that current river stages could reach.

The Mississippi crested at 45 feet, seven inches on May 19, just a few feet

below the stage during the 1993 flood.

“Traylor Brothers has built a temporary place to tie the barges, but we still cannot perform the critical operations with the river this high,” Lamb said. “We’ll have to wait and hope that the water falls quickly after the crest.”



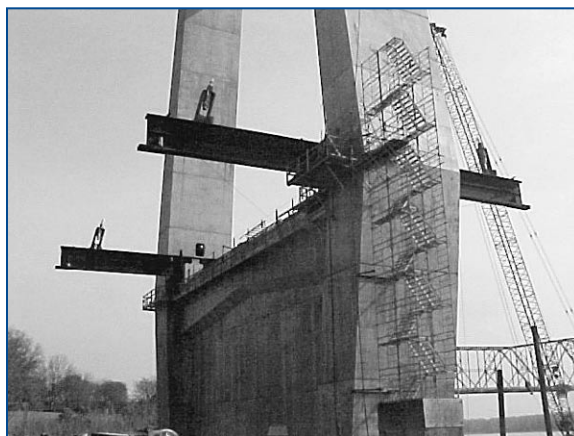
*Mississippi River envelopes cofferdam.*

## Cables Make First Appearance On Pier 2

Those are actually cables being installed on Pier 2. The first of the cable work got underway in May.

The process was described in depth in the last issue of *The Beacon*. By mid-April, contractor Traylor Brothers was readying the tower legs for roadway supports and then the first stay cables could be added.

“Installing the cables is a continuous six-part process,” said MoDOT Senior Construction Inspector Rick Lamb,



*Roadway supports were added to Pier 2. This is the first step in installing the cables.*



“First, the roadway supports are set, then stay cables, then precast deck panels (used for the roadway driving surface foundation), then tensioning those panels, then pouring some concrete joints between the panels and pouring the overhangs, then back to the next section of supports.”

Pier 3 work will continue with tower leg pours weekly once the river goes down. Pier 3 should be to the bow tie level in June.

*continued on p. 2*

*A look at Pier 2. The bow tie is the portion of concrete in the center connecting the pier towers. The pier tower for Pier 3 is expected to be completed this fall.*

## An In Depth Look:

**Ron Robertson**

Intermediate Construction Inspector



"This is a once in a lifetime project," said Ron Robertson, echoing the thoughts of most of his co-workers. "The completion of such an enormous project will give us all a major sense of satisfaction."

Robertson has had a close-up, and in most cases, a bird's eye view of the Emerson Bridge construction.

"On the average day, I climb stairs and ladders 300 feet into the air and inspect as concrete is poured on the pier tower. I watch as the cable-stay anchors undergo post-tensioning at about 245 feet. I work in the middle of the Mississippi River to assure the placement of steel and concrete are the same in Pier 3 as in Pier 2. While inspecting, I find time to take photos to record the progress each day. It's all in a day's work," he said.

The Emerson Bridge is not just another project for Robertson.

"Most people think of this as just the building of the bridge. When we complete all of the contracts, I can say that half of my 20-year MoDOT career has been working on the Route 74 corridor," he said.

## Cable/Construction Update Cont.

The bowtie will be constructed July through August at the same time as tower leg pours continue above that location. The schedule anticipates the top level before the cap to be completed in late October.

"Of course, all these dates remain dependent upon the weather," Lamb said.

Pier 4 continues the process to sink the caisson.

The biggest news for the bridge this summer will be accepting bids on the two



*Side view of Pier 2 and the roadway supports near bottom. The cables will be connected to the supports.*

remaining bridge contracts.

Bids are set to be accepted in June for contracts for Missouri and Illinois approach roadway projects.

The Illinois project includes constructing the deck on the east approach spans.

The Missouri project includes building the approach roadway from Sprigg Street east to the new bridge.

If the projects are awarded, work could begin this fall.

## Emerson Bridge Grand Opening In The Works

The first steering committee meeting to plan the grand opening of the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge got underway this past February. City and county officials and law enforcement were on hand to discuss ways to celebrate the big day.

"The season in which the grand opening takes place will have a big effect on what type of celebration we plan," said committee

co-chair and Chamber president John Mehner.

"Once we get closer to the opening, we'll have a better idea about what is possible. We wanted to get going early to develop ideas and resources, however, because we want this to be a special event to commemorate this important addition to our city."

The second steering committee meeting will



take place in early summer with additional community leaders invited to participate.

*Above, clockwise from top left: Chamber president John Mehner, Former CVB Director Terri Clark-Bauer, District Engineer Scott Meyer, City Director of Planning Services Kent Bratton and Area Engineer Stan Johnson.*

### Emerson Bridge Fun Fact For Kids:

Currently, 14,000 cars go over the bridge each day. If you lined up 14,000 VW Bugs, they would stretch for more than 31 miles. This is almost the same as the distance between Cape Girardeau, Mo., and Sikeston, Mo. By the year 2015, approximately 26,000 cars will use the bridge. That's nearly 60 miles of cars or the distance between Cape and Ste. Genevieve, Mo.





# The Bridge Beat

## • New Commissioner From Southeast Missouri

Anyone who listens to the newest member of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission knows immediately that Duane Michie has a passion for transportation--and for making Missouri's transportation system better.

Commissioner Michie led a discussion about Missouri's transportation future during a recent MoDOT/legislator meeting at the district office in Sikeston. The Commissioner told the legislators he believes Missouri must make transportation a major priority and the state will reap major benefits.

"Tennessee decided to make transportation and economic development its number one focus," Michie said. "And, if you look at Western Tennessee during the last three years, there have been 41 new industries and 3,100 jobs located on new four-lane roads."

Michie said he'll begin his term by learning the ins and outs of the Missouri Department of Transportation.

"First, I'm going to make my best effort to understand the process," Michie said. "Second, getting the public to understand we must complete these corridor projects. It's important for the economic impacts for the region. They enhance the opportunity not just for industry but also for commercial development like new truck stops and hotels. This employs people in the region and that is especially important for rural Missouri."

Not all the economic benefits come after the project is completed. The article below details the economic impacts of the Emerson Bridge construction. Michie said he is pleased with any way MoDOT can improve economic development in Southeast Missouri.

"It is a plus and a positive to the whole region,"

he said.

The bridge will also be a vital transportation link should Southeast Missouri ever face an earthquake.

"The earthquake resistant features of this bridge will help traffic to continue to flow across the river should something terrible ever happen," Michie said.

Michie joins the Commission during a challenging time for MoDOT but said he is full of hope.

"I was truly impressed with the Southeast District legislative meeting. I was so proud of our area engineers, project managers and other associates during that meeting.

"It gave legislators the opportunity to come forth and hear a group of professional people who are providing the safest transportation possible. They are very knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of the projects they are working on. With this type of professionalism, we're in good shape."

Michie feels meetings to discuss transportation with the legislators are beneficial to everyone.

"We have to keep the legislators involved and informed and get their input," he said.

Michie may be the newest commissioner but said his goals are the same as the other commissioners.

"We want to provide the best, safest transportation network that we can in Missouri," he said.



*Commissioner Duane Michie speaking at a MoDOT/legislator meeting.*

## Transportation Construction Brings Jobs

As you drive through work zones, have you ever wondered what they mean to your community? In addition to improving the roads you travel, highway construction brings big economic benefits to communities.

An article in the *Transportation Research Record* reports that in addition to providing easier access, increased efficiency and

more productivity, transportation projects also create new jobs and expand income.

The Emerson Bridge contractor employs more than 100 people and MoDOT has six employees working full-time on the project, not including the MoDOT personnel who work with the bridge construction and other projects. That also doesn't

include the subcontractors, bridge designers and consultants who have put in time.

The article shows that for every \$1 million investment, new bridge construction creates 20 years of employment for one person. With a \$100 million price tag, the Emerson Bridge project would create 20 years of employment for 100 people.

"Many people understand the importance of the Emerson Memorial Bridge to commerce, but few people realize the economic impact the construction alone has created for our area. Construction dollars turn over three times, conservatively, making the total impact even greater," said Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce President John Mehner.

## *The Beacon*

is published quarterly by the Missouri Department of Transportation's Southeast District. It is mailed to Southeast Missouri residents interested in the construction of the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge to provide information on the project's progress, significant milestones and related news. Comments, questions and suggestions are welcome. Please send to:

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## **Funding Facts**

Combining public input and established engineering standards, MoDOT has a three-point direction that will guide its efforts for the foreseeable future, based on available funding. They are:

- 1. Take Care of What We Have**--We'll devote the necessary resources to taking care of our existing system, regardless of whether or not we receive new funding.
- 2. Finish What We've Started**--During the last 10 years, we've invested more than \$4 billion in major highway corridor work, and that work must be completed.
- 3. Provide Transportation Options**--Our responsibilities in multi-modal transportation options are limited, but additional funding from a dedicated, protected source will give Missourians what they want and need in other modes.

**This is where we are headed  
and these three points will guide our efforts.**

## *The Beacon*

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